GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4215
ANSWERED ON:21.08.2001
CULTIVATION OF PONGAMIA
JASWANT SINGH YADAV

Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the soil of Rajasthan is fit for cultivating Pongamia;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the oil obtained from Pongamia seed is a substitute for diesel;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the extent to which the farmers of Rajasthan are likely to be benefited as a result thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT)

(a) & (b): As per the data from Botanical Survey of India, Pongamia can be cultivated in Rajasthan. Though there is no managed or organized cultivation of Pongamia in Rajasthan, however, in Jodhpur the plant produces seeds. The tree grows along the road side and has tolerance to salinity and very high resistance to termites.

(c) and (d) : As per a report from Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, the oil obtained from seed of Pongamia pinnata (honge oil) has potential for use and replacement of diesel. The honge oil has to be pre-heated for use since the viscosity of the oil is much higher than that of diesel at room temperature. The power output of the diesel engine remains almost same, though the calorific value of honge oil is slightly lower. The initial problems encountered in using honge oil were related to choking of filters.

(e) : The farmers could immensely benefit from organized large scale plantation of Pongamia, specially to meet their energy requirements.